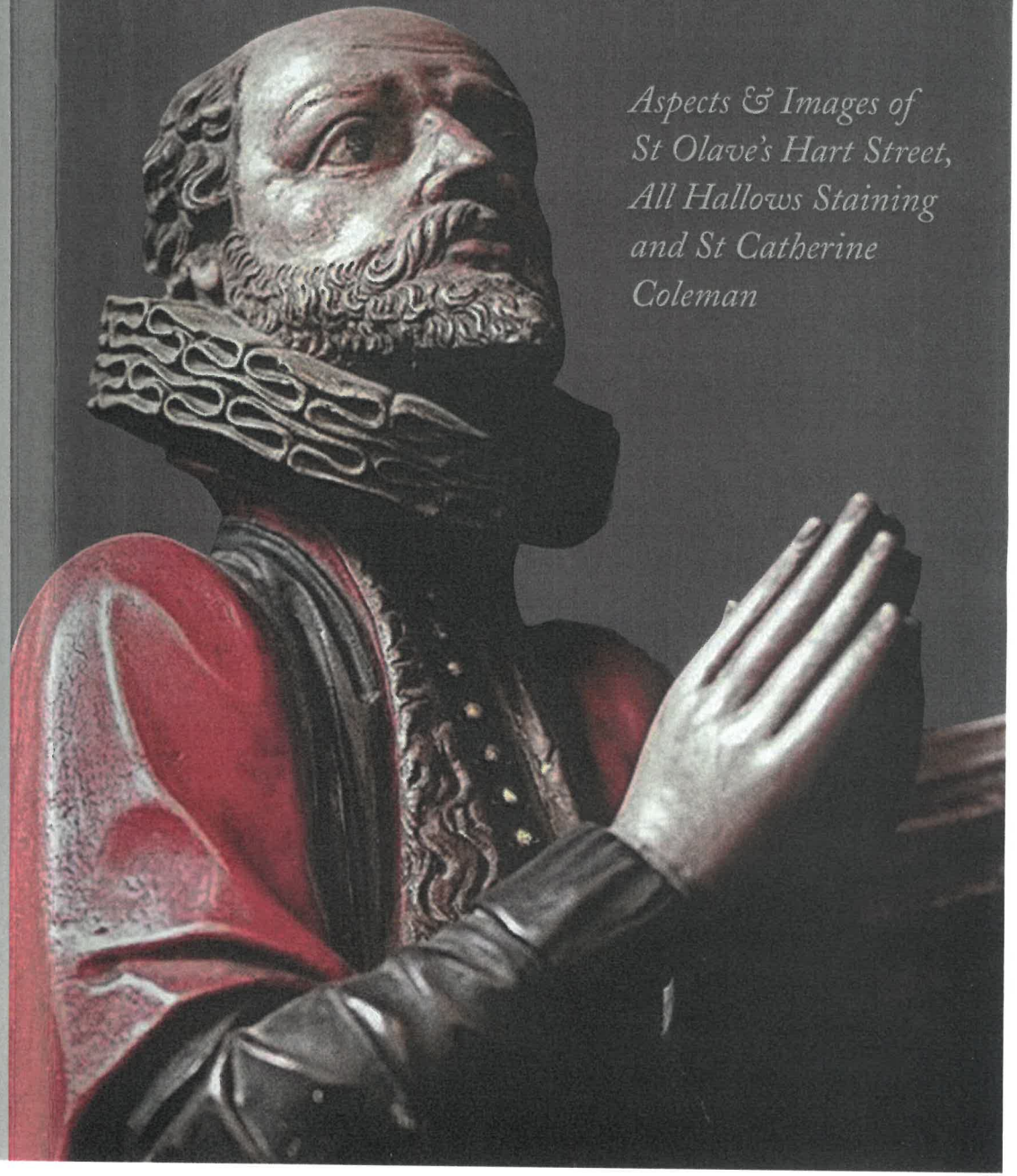
*...To **our own church**, and at noon, by invitation, Sir W. Pen dined with me, and I took Mrs. Hester, my Lady Batten's kinswoman, to dinner from church with me, and we were very merry. So to church again, and heard a simple fellow upon the praise of Church musique, and exclaiming against men's wearing their hats on in the church, but I slept part of the sermon, till latter prayer and blessing and all was done without waking which I never did in my life...*

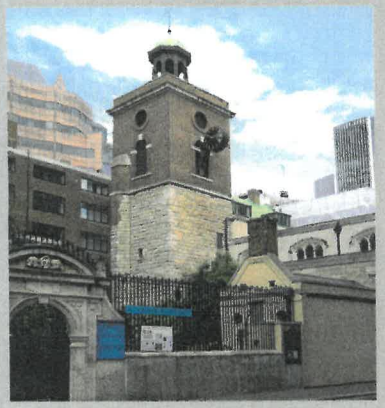
from *The Diary of Samuel Pepys, Sunday 17 November 1661*

'Our Own Church'

Aspects & Images of St Olave's Hart Street, All Hallows Staining and St Catherine Coleman



'Our Own Church'



St Olave's is one of the few medieval churches to have survived the Great Fire of London. Its origins can be traced back to around the time of the Norman conquest of 1066. Today it continues to be a thriving centre of Christian life and worship in the midst of the busy City of London.

'Our Own Church'

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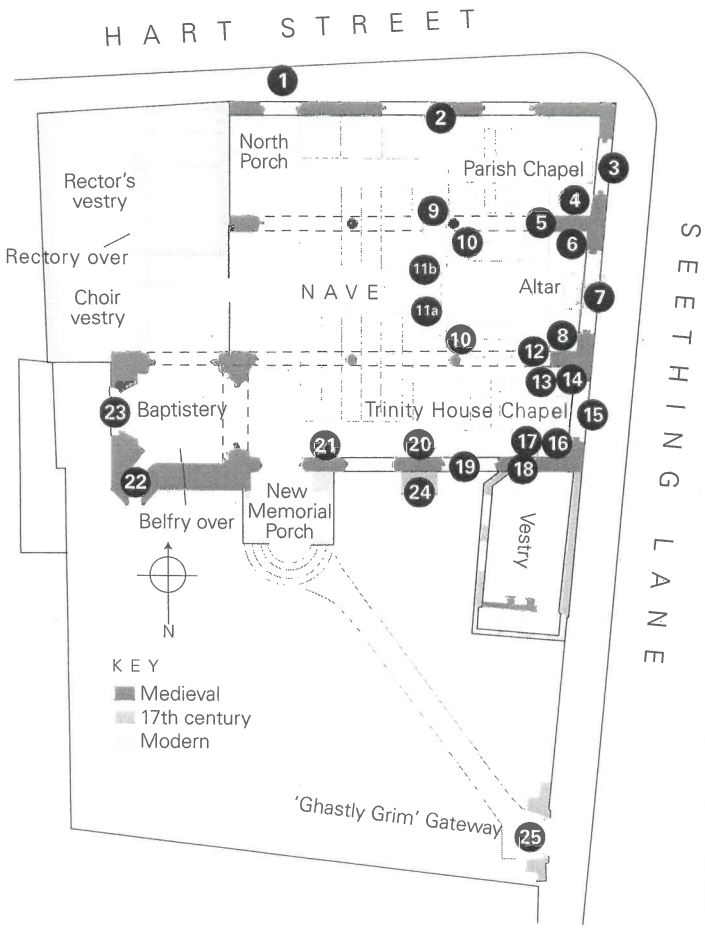


1 **Environmental Cleaners' Window** The newest window in the church, installed in 2009.

2 **Riccard Memorial** A prominent merchant mentioned by Pepys, Sir Andrew Riccard is shown in the robes of a Roman senator. By John Bushnell.

3 **Lady Chapel** The main panels represent the three parishes united in the present one: All Hallows Staining, St Olave Hart Street (subsidiary dedication – St Mary the Virgin) and St Catherine Coleman.

4 **Capponi Memorial** From a powerful Florentine merchant family, Peter Capponi fled to London to escape political turmoil and died of plague.

5 **Bayning Memorial** Andrew (*left*) and Paul Bayning (*right*) are dressed in the robes of aldermen.

6 **Elizabeth Pepys Memorial** The wife of Samuel Pepys, Elizabeth died in 1669. Her gaze is towards the Navy Office Pew, where her husband would have sat (see 20 and 24). By John Bushnell.

7 **East Window** The two central lights represent Christ as saviour and as victor. The lower left panel is of St Olave, while the right shows St George.

8 **Radcliffe Memorial** The figure above is Sir John Radcliffe, son of the first Earl of Sussex. His wife, Dame Anne, occupies the niche below.

9 **Pulpit** Acquired in 1867 from St Bene't Gracechurch Street, the pulpit is a fine example of 17th-century carving.

10 **Sword Stands (left & right)** Gifted to parishioners elected as Lord Mayor and placed on their pews. All four date from the 18th century.

11 **Restoration Stones** Installed in the 1950s. **11a**: the 'Stone of History' records successive churches on the site and has inset a piece of masonry from St Paul's Cathedral. **11b**: the 'Restoration Stone', laid by King Haakon VII of Norway contains a fragment of soapstone from St Olave's tomb in Trondheim.

12 **Mennes Memorial** Often mentioned in Pepys's Diary, Sir John Mennes was Comptroller of the Navy and Master of Trinity House.

13 **Haddon Ledger Stone** Commemorates Sir Richard Haddon, Lord Mayor in 1506 and 1512.

14 **Peter Turner Memorial** Peter Turner was a doctor of physic and son of William Turner (see 16). His monument was partly restored in 2013, the effigy, lost in the Second World War, having been returned to the church in 2011.

15 **Trinity House Chapel** St Olave's is the parish church of Trinity House (*est.* 1514), the body responsible for coastal safety in England and Wales and the licensing of deep-sea pilots.

16 **William Turner Memorial** Dean of Wells Cathedral and author of *A New Herball*, the first guide to plants and their uses written in English, William Turner was the father of Peter (see 14).

17 **Deane Memorial** Sir James Deane amassed a fortune in India and China, but gave generously to the poor.

18 **Vestry Door** Believed older than the present church building and to be part of the first stone church on this site (13th century).

19 **Clothworkers' Window** Dedicated to the church's principal benefactor, the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers..

20 **Samuel Pepys Memorial** A Victorian monument to the diarist, unveiled in 1883 at the site of the entrance to the former Navy Office Pew (see 24).

21 **Powell Miller Memorial** As Rector of the church in the 1950s, The Revd Augustus Powell Miller oversaw the rebuilding of St Olave's after the Second World War.

22 **Statue of St Olave** A ceramic statue of the saint, sculpted by a Norwegian, Carl Schou (1950s).

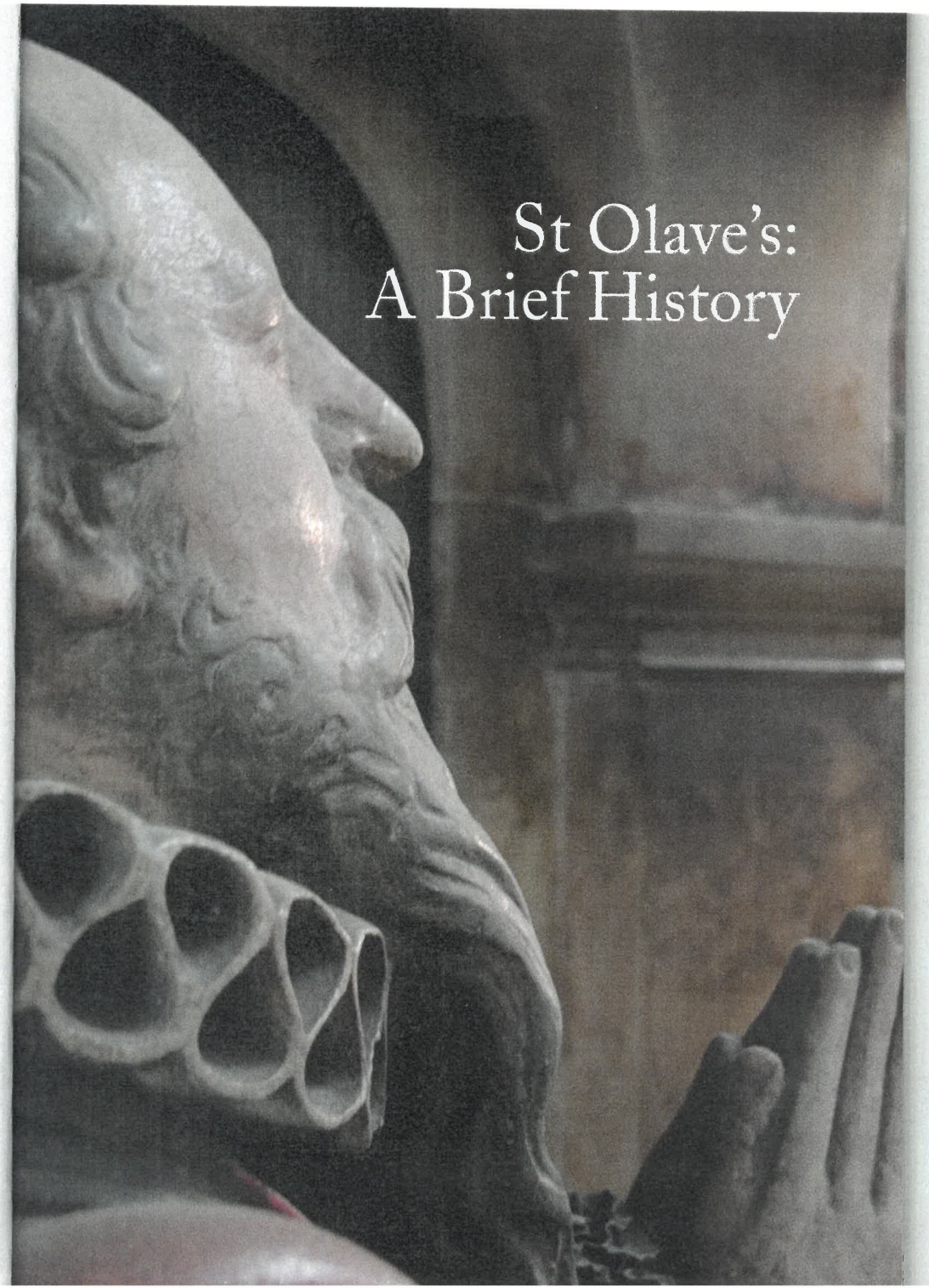
23 **Stairs to Crypt** The Crypt Chapel is a remnant of the 13th-century church and may be viewed by appointment.

24 **Pepys Entrance Plaque (outside)** Marks the entrance to the former Navy Office Pew, which was accessed by an external staircase running parallel to the wall (see 6 and 20).

25 **Ghastly Grim Gate (1658)** Charles Dickens referred to the churchyard as 'Saint Ghastly Grim', thus giving this gate its nickname. The Latin inscription translates as: 'To me, to live is Christ, to die is gain.'

Often we remind ourselves that we are the heirs of nine centuries of Christian worship on this hallowed site. For all those long years, reaching back to pre-Conquest days, the praises of God and the prayers of His people have been ascending to the Throne of grace from this place. The very mental and spiritual atmosphere which you breathe as you step out of Hart Street into this Sanctuary has been gradually created by the worshippers of the past. And many times in recent days when visitors have come in to see the restored church they have confessed to having paused; they entered to view what the craftsmen had wrought but had to own their consciousness of its hallowed atmosphere …
In the quiet and silence of this Sanctuary we can know that 'we are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,' and that the past mingles with the present and can inspire us for whatever tasks the future has in store for us.

From a sermon by The Revd Augustus Powell-Miller, Rector of St Olave Hart Street from 1943 to 1959. Powell-Miller oversaw the post-war restoration of the church and his work is commemorated in a Latin inscription on a slate plaque on the south wall of the church.



St Olave's: A Brief History

Note: In the text that follows, numbers in **bold** within square brackets refer to features identified on the Church Plan and Guide on the inside front cover of this booklet.

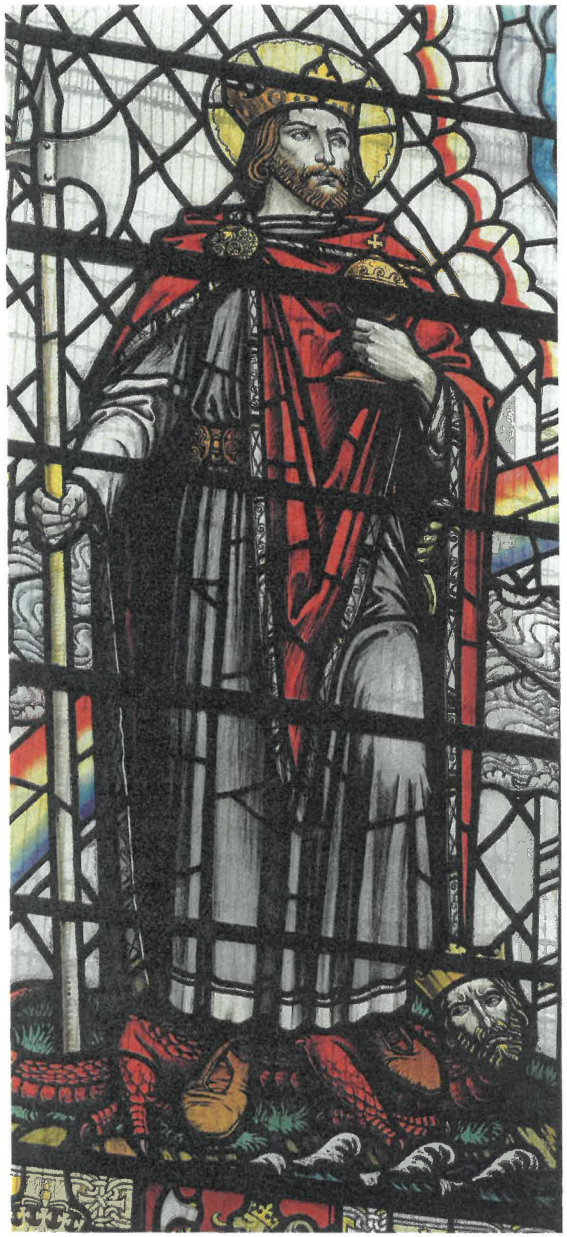
Who was St Olave?

Of all the saints of Scandinavia perhaps none is more renowned than Olaf II Haraldsson, who lived from 995 to 1030 and was king of Norway from 1015 to 1028.

Olave – to give his name its English form – was the son of Harald Groenske, a direct descendant of the first king of Norway. Olave's father died before he was born, and his mother Aasta then married Sigurd Syr, king of Ringarike, who raised and educated him. It was a time of great rivalry between Norway and Denmark. In about 999 Norway's king, Olaf Tryggvason – Olave's distant cousin – had been defeated at the Battle of Svolder by Sweyn I Forkbeard, king of Denmark, who took over the Norwegian throne. King Sweyn then set his sights on the English crown and by 1013 had conquered England. His son, Canute, succeeded him on his death that year.

The exiled English king, Ethelred the Unready, began attempts to overturn Danish rule. Olave was among his loyal supporters, and in 1014 set sail up the Thames to help recapture London. A large force of Danes held the bridge in London which connected the castle on the north side of the Thames (possibly, later, the site of the Tower of London) with the stronghold on the south side, Southwark (orig. *Suthringa Geworc* or 'defensive work of the men of Surrey'). The Danes had built a great bulwark of stone, timber and turf, which the English forces were trying to attack without success.

It is said that Olave came to the rescue of the English at a critical moment. He and his men built canopies of planks over their ships' decks to protect against the stones hurled down on them from the bridge by the Danes. They then rowed up underneath the bridge, fastened cables round the supporting piles, and rowed as hard as they could downstream. The supports gave way and the bridge came down. Many of the Danish defenders either fell into the river or fled, with the result that Southwark was stormed and



St Olave, as shown in the East Window of the church [7] The dragon at the saint's feet has his face, as it is said that the dragon he had to overcome was his own fiery nature.

taken and London was recaptured. This became known as the Battle of London Bridge and is thought by some to be the origin of the rhyme *London Bridge is Falling Down*.

Olave felt it was his calling to unite Norway and returned to his homeland in 1015. He travelled by way of France and was baptised in Rouen. The following year he defeated the Danes in battle and started to consolidate his role as king of Norway. Although sources are unclear and sometimes contradictory, it is believed that he helped to encourage the gradual assimilation of Christianity throughout Scandinavia. He ruled until 1028 when he was driven into exile after discontented Norwegian nobles supported an invasion of Norway by Sweyn's son, King Canute. Olave tried to win back his kingdom but was killed in battle at Stiklestad on 29 July 1030 and was buried at Trondheim. People reported miraculous happenings around the time of his death, and a year later he was honoured among the saints with the title of martyr.

There was a strong Scandinavian element in England, and reverence for King Olave as martyr and saint quickly spread. Churches in his honour began to be established here, one of the earliest being a church in York erected at some point before 1055 by an Earl Siward, who was probably of Scandinavian descent.

St Olave, as shown in relief above the entrance to the Rectory on Hart Street

Foundation and Early Years

The first church dedicated to St Olave on the site in Hart Street was probably a simple wooden structure built before the end of the 11th century. At that time, following the conquest of England by William the Conqueror, London had begun to extend westwards from the Tower. With the increase in building and a larger population – including a mixture of nationalities – the number of churches multiplied.

Few details of this first wooden church exist. The Domesday survey of 1086 did not cover the City of London and many early records were destroyed in the great fires that swept London in 1087 and 1136. It is therefore difficult to discover precisely when old City parishes were formed, or when churches that afterwards became parish churches were built. In contrast to great monastic houses whose rise would be recorded by chroniclers and whose archives would document their privileges, pedigree and standing, the erection of humble wooden parish churches would not have attracted a great deal of attention.

The earliest confirmed reference to St Olave's and the location of its parish close to the Tower of London occurs in a collection of deeds and charters dated 1109. In these the wife of King Henry I, Queen Maud, disposed of some land in the parish of 'St Olave's by the Tower' (*'juxta Turrim'*). Subsequent references are made in a will, proved in 1284 and mentioning the parish of St Olave, and in another of 1303 that alludes to the church.

In the late 12th or early 13th century, a stone church was built on the same site to replace the wooden structure. After the founding of the monastery of the Crutched Friars in around 1298, the parish was usually styled 'beside the house of the Holy Cross'. The Order of the Crossed (or Crouched/Crutched) Friars, which is being referred to here, was introduced into England in 1244 and had its first house at Colchester. Originally the friars carried a cross affixed to a staff, hence the designation *fratres cruciferi* ('cross-bearers'), but later wore a cross of red cloth on their backs or breasts over their blue habit. There were no more than seven houses of these friars in England and the order never gained any great importance. The London monastery was dissolved on 12 November 1538 but there are still Crutched

Friars in Holland. The street that runs from the north-east corner of the church retains the name Crutched Friars.

By the time of the earliest parish registers of 1563, the church was designated 'St Olave's in Hartestreet', while the earliest references to Hart Street are found in Atte Welle's will (1352), where it is spelt 'Herthstrete'. It may be that Hart comes from 'hearth' – possibly hearths were made and sold in the street. More likely, 'Herthstrete' is a shortened form of 'Herthston-street', while the change from 'Herthstrete' to 'Hertstrete' has a parallel in early forms of the word 'hearthstone', which became 'hert-stone' (*c.*1325) or

One of four 18th-century pewter alms dishes by Henry Sewdley that are owned by the church. The central device, suggesting one possible origin for 'Hart Street', makes up in wit and elegance for what it may lack in accuracy.

'hartstone' (*c.*1475). There is also an old tradition in the parish that 'Hart Street' stood for 'Heart Street', this popular opinion being supported by the existence of four 17th-century pewter alms-plates engraved with the letters 'SOS' and a heart in the centre.[1]

Two City merchants, Richard and Robert Cely, erected the present building, the third on the site, in the 1460s, largely replacing the earlier stone church. Remnants of the 12/13th-century building still survive, however, including the west wall of the Crypt chapel (situated beneath the west end of the church and originally constructed over a pre-existing well) and the doorway to the Vestry **[18]** in the south-east corner of the church.

Designated as being 'in the vicinity of Aldgate', the church now comes within the Ward of Tower, the ward taking its name from the Tower of London, while Aldgate is commonly supposed to mean 'Old Gate', although in a document dating from before 1115 the name is spelt 'Alegate', possibly equivalent to 'Allgate', i.e. 'gate for all, free of toll'.

Wartime Damage and Restoration

For nearly 500 years the medieval church survived intact – with a number of internal and external alterations – until the Second World War. During the Blitz of 1940 most of the windows were lost when a bomb fell close by, and then in the spring of the following year the church suffered devastating damage in two separate bombing incidents. Fallen masonry and those monuments that had survived the bombing were carefully salvaged and preserved in the hope that the church could be rebuilt after the war.

Fortunately at the beginning of the war many of the church treasures had been moved to the country for safe keeping – to Sussex, Somerset and Devon – while the more important were stored in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. Amazingly, the church plate and the registers survived, even though the building next to their storage place was destroyed by firebombs.

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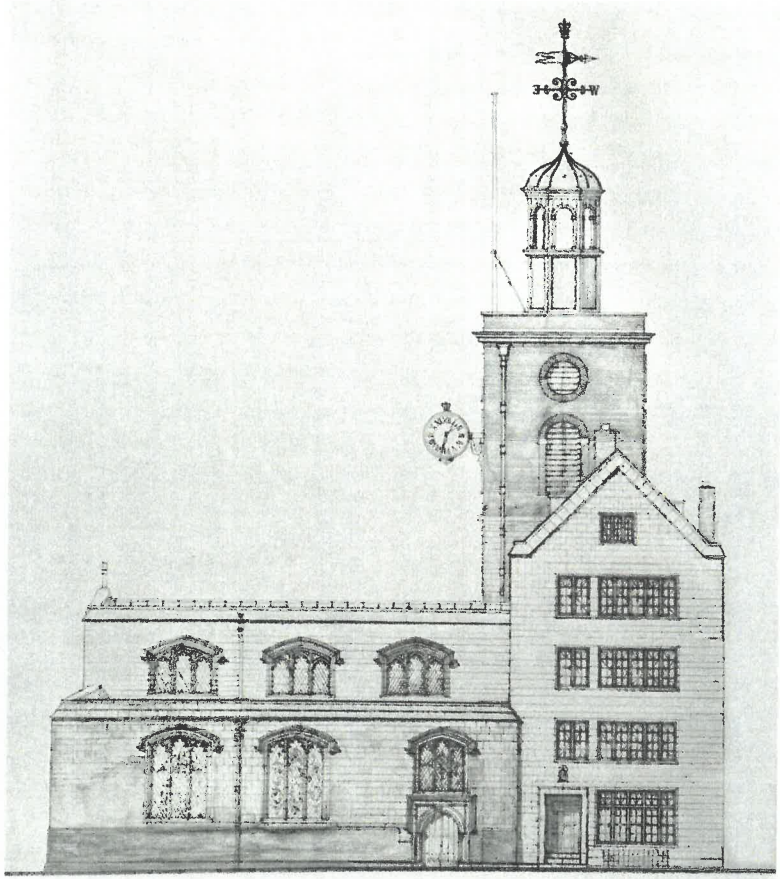
[1] This device has been revived on the brass handles of the glass doors installed at the Hart Street entrance to the church in 2012.



HART STREET ELEVATION

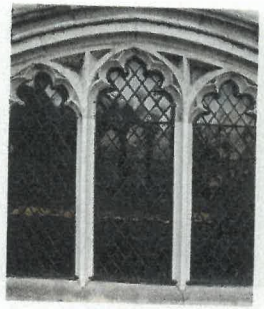
Rebuilding of the church took place between 1951 and 1954. The architect, Ernest Glanfield (1885–1955), had planned a more modern reconstruction but found that enough of the original structure remained to enable it to be restored to its pre-war layout. The Baptistery and the lower stone base of the Tower (the upper part being built of brick in the 18th century) remain of original 15th-century construction, as do the lower courses of the

Facing page: Architect's drawing of the north elevation of the restored church and new rectory

Right: Crown Prince Olav of Norway (later King Olav V) in the post-war ruins of the church and in conversation with The Revd Augustus Powell-Miller.

north wall, most of the south wall and the pillars and arches of the north and south arcades. Alongside masonry from the walls, seven complete window-heads and a number of mullions were salvaged from the wartime ruins and were reinstated. The sole 20th-century addition to the building outline is the south porch, which was, apart from the carving of St Martin above the external entrance, financed from a restoration fund set up by the Wine & Spirit Trades and contains a memorial to members of those trades who fell in the two world wars.

Maintaining the Norwegian connection that has spanned the centuries, in 1951, at the start of the post-war restoration, King Haakon VII of Norway laid the Restoration Stone **[11b]** at the entrance to the chancel and into this is set a fragment of carved and inscribed stone from near St Olave's tomb in Nidaros Cathedral, Trondheim. At the same service, on 15 June, the Bishop of London laid the 'Stone of History' **[11a]**, which briefly records the dates of the successive churches on the site and into which is set a piece of masonry from St Paul's Cathedral.

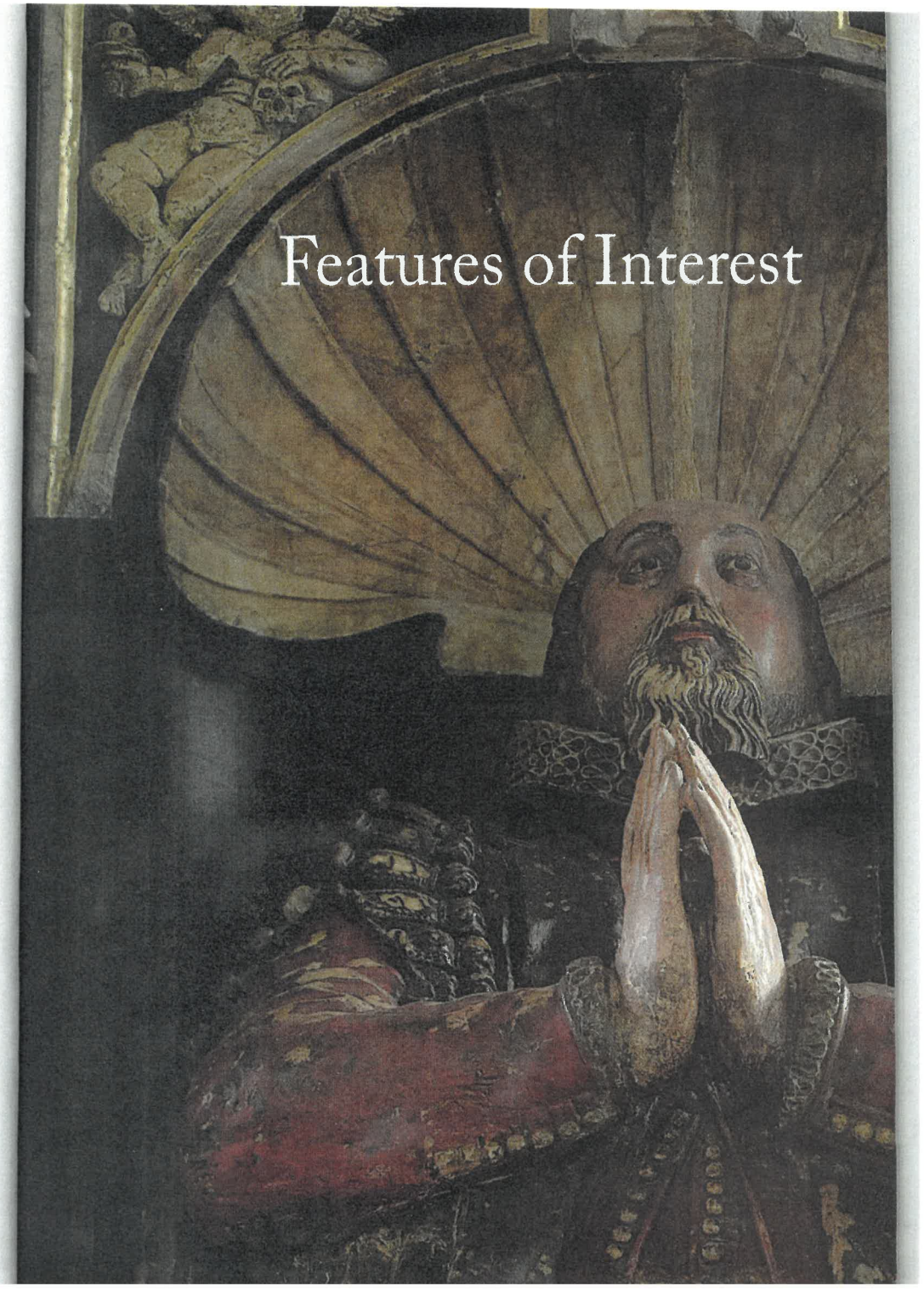


Left: a Clerestory window on the south side of the church shows the marriage of old and new stone. Right: part of the organ screen and gallery facing at the west end of the church.

The Mix of Old and New

Apart from their architectural interest the City churches are alive with a sense of history. Nowhere is this more true than in St Olave's since, both in its actual structure and in its furnishings, old and new exist side by side in close harmony. Findings made on the site during post-war excavations of the foundations span the centuries from Roman Britain to modern England, while some of the memorials date back to early Tudor days and more recent ones commemorate losses in two world wars. Many remark that the church retains its peaceful atmosphere amid the bustle of the City, the poet Sir John Betjeman, for example, describing it as 'a country church in the world of Seething Lane'.

It is especially worth noting that St Olave's is the only City church whose restoration was influenced by the 'Festival of Britain' style, which was very characteristic of Ernest Glanfield's work – indeed, St Olave's is the only City church on which Glanfield worked. There are occasional hints of the style in the embellishments of the ceiling, but frank examples of it can be found in the starred reredos in the Trinity House Chapel (south aisle) [15] and the organ screen in the gallery at the west end. A wonderful integration is achieved across the whole post-war woodwork scheme, one particularly pleasing example being the way in which the leaf pattern in the organ screen is repeated on the north entrance lobby.



Features of Interest

- **The Pulpit [9]** came to St Olave's from St Bene't Gracechurch Street (demolished in the 19th century) as the gift of Trinity House, the body responsible for coastal safety in England and Wales (see pages 17 and 20). Once thought to be the work of Grinling Gibbons, it is certainly a fine example of 17th-century wood carving. It was cleaned of many varnishings, as was the 17th-century carved altar rail, prior to reinstallation in the 1950s, when it was relocated to the north side and a new wooden base and desk were provided for it.

- Four wrought-iron **Sword Stands [10]** are placed on the ends of the stones forming the chancel wall. It was customary for the Lord Mayor to attend divine service at a City church on Sunday morning accompanied by the sheriffs and escorted by the Bearer of the Mace and the Bearer of the State Sword. Between the 16th and 18th centuries it was sometimes the practice to honour a parishioner elected as Lord Mayor with the provision of a sword stand, sword rest or 'branch' (sometimes called a 'Trophy of Arms'), placed on his pew. Originally such stands were made of wood, some few examples of which survive in City churches, but those in St Olave's all date from the 18th century, by which time wrought iron was invariably used. Repainted in 2011 and with new support brackets provided, their predominant colour now – following expert historic paint analysis – is Prussian blue instead of black.

- In choosing designs for the **Windows** of the post-war church the restorers took into account reduced light levels resulting from the increased height of surrounding new office buildings. It was decided that the Clerestory should be true to its literal meaning – 'clear-storey' – and that nothing like the darker pre-war stained-glass windows would be repeated. The east windows would retain some links with their predecessors, but would chiefly depict figures in a setting of as much plain glass as possible, while the aisle windows would only show heraldic devices set in slightly tinted cathedral glass.

Above: The north-facing side of the pulpit. Right: A detail from the sword stand of Sir Charles Peers, Lord Mayor of London in 1715, showing the arms of the City (top) and those of the Salters' Company (below).

- The **East Window [7]** has two central lights: '*Christus Salvator*' ('Christ the Saviour') and '*Christus Victor*' ('Christ Victorious'), which correspond to the former subjects of this window. On the left and right panels respectively under figures of angels facing inwards are *(i)* St Olave with King Haakon VII's arms beneath; and *(ii)* St George above Queen Elizabeth II's arms, the two figures being symbolically linked by waves of the sea. Here, as in the new Chancel wall, the Anglo-Norse tradition is rightly emphasised since the church is now the only one remaining in the City of London with a St Olave dedication. In the tracery lights, as formerly, the symbols of the four evangelists are shown with the Sacred Sign as a centrepiece.

Queen Elizabeth I, as shown in the window of the Lady Chapel [3]. Painstaking work was needed in order to create the gradient of colour from left to right across her dress.

- The **Lady Chapel Window [3]** on the north side of the church has three lights, each of which represents one of the parishes of the united benefice (see pages 39–47). The centre panel (St Olave Hart Street) depicts the Virgin and Child, as in earlier days the church had a subsidiary dedication to St Mary. On the left (All Hallows Staining) Queen Elizabeth I is shown with the bells of the church at her feet and, on the right, St Katharine of Alexandria represents the former parish of St Catherine Coleman. Above, in the four tracery lights are depicted more modern types of Christian womanhood: Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Josephine Butler and Edith Cavell. The **Reredos in the Lady Chapel** was a gift of the Committee of Lloyd's Register of Shipping and carries emblems of the three united parishes.

- In the **Trinity House Chapel [15]** on the south side, the window honours the fallen of the two world wars and was gifted by the Corporation of Trinity House. St Clement, the patron saint of Trinity House, occupies the centre light, while the arms of the corporation and of HRH Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester (Master of Trinity House from 1942 to 1969), are in the adjoining lights.

- In the **Windows of the South Aisle**, the arms of the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers have an honoured place **[19]**, the simple description beneath – 'Generous Benefactors' – recording the parish's indebtedness to a link going back many centuries. The figure of St Thomas was added in 2000. In the adjacent window is the crest of the Corn Exchange Company, recording a connection (since lost) that came with a post-war change in parish boundaries, the Corn Exchange having been rebuilt in the 1950s. Above the south porch a fine window honours Viscount Monsell of Evesham, PC GBE (1st Lord of the Admiralty 1931–6).

- The **Window above the North Porch [1]** is the newest in the church and was installed in 2009. It shows the arms of the Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners and was funded by a generous bequest of the late Doreen May Heyes, one-time Almoner of the Company.

- The **Window east of the Riccard Memorial in the North Aisle** shows the arms of the Port of London Authority and was given by the PLA to acknowledge that its then headquarters building (now known as 10 Trinity Square and occupying part of the former site of the Navy Office that was home to Samuel Pepys) was partly within the parish.

- In the arcading, the Baptistery, and the masonry of the windows and other features, there are highly skilful blends of old and new, where the two cannot easily be separated. The **Bells** are very clear example of such a happy combination. In 1662 Anthony Bartlett of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry cast five bells for the Tower of St Olave's. His son James made a sixth bell in 1694 and in 1929 the peal was completed by the gift of Viscount Wakefield.

  During the third air raid on the church in May 1941, the Tower was hit by an incendiary and became a roaring furnace which brought down the bells in a molten mass. This metal was salvaged and the foundry that made the original peal recast the eight bells, largely from their old metal. The story of the bells is briefly recorded on the Tenor bell, with an inscription reading, 'From the same metal which the fires of war melted down, 1941, we were re-cast 1952'. The names of The Revd Augustus Powell Miller, the six contemporary churchwardens and the bell foundry, are also recorded. On Christmas morning 1953 the first peal was rung on the new bells: three courses of Stedman Triples by ringers from St Paul's Cathedral conducted by Mr A. A. Hughes of Messrs Mears and Stainbank.

- At the south-east corner of the church the **Vestry** is a most inviting room and dates from 1662, although its stout oak door **[18]** is thought to be as much as 600 years old. Dr Alfred Povah (Rector from 1860 to 1901)[2] quotes the Parish Records of 1661, when an assessment on the parish was made for a re-building of the Vestry. It was signed by Daniel Mills, the incumbent of Pepys's time, and Sir Andrew Riccard, then patron of the benefice (see page 28).

[2] Dr Povah's *The Annals of St. Olave Hart Street and Allhallows Staining in The City of London* was published in 1894 and a copy may be viewed by prior arrangement with the church office.

The fine plaster ceiling, with an angel in relief in the centre, was repaired after slight war damage[3] and the painting in chiaroscuro (attributed to Emanuel de Witte) above the fireplace was cleaned by conservators from the National Gallery.

- The **Baptistery** occupies the lower level of the Tower. Its stonework was badly scorched in the Blitz and was renewed, while the fine arch on the north side was fully exposed for the first time in many years. This arch was formerly bricked in and Dr Povah records that: 'On removing the cement on the north side of the tower a portion of an arch and of a capital was disclosed. This suggests that the nave of the church formerly extended further west than it does at present.'

- Most of the **Memorials** on the Baptistery wall unfortunately perished in the fire of May 1941. Destruction of the memorial to Monkhouse Davison and Abram Newman was particularly grievous, this being among the memorials removed to St Olave's from All Hallows Staining when the parishes were amalgamated and commemorating two churchwardens of All Hallows Staining who were partners in one of the oldest firms of tea merchants in the City.

- In the base of the turret staircase to the belfry, behind a grille, stands a **Statuette of St Olave [22]**, presented to the church by Charles Williams, churchwarden. The Norwegian sculptor, Carl Schou, completed this work, which is in painted terracotta in a traditional style, shortly before his death in 1953.

- A simple but effectively designed moveable **Font** on a wooden pedestal replaces the former marble font (designed by Sir Gilbert Scott and presented to the church in 1862), which was given to the church of St Olave, Toronto, in 1937. After the Second World War that church made a contribution to the cost of the current font. Old photographs indicate that the marble font had occupied several positions in the church.

[3] The ceiling was stripped of 19 coats of paint and back to its original plaster in 2008 and then repainted in off-white to approximate to the colour of the original 17th-century distemper.

The postwar woodwork scheme is executed in light oak, incorporating harmonious design elements, and is of a high degree of craftsmanship.

- A new **Reredos** was designed for the main altar, with a retable for altar silver and recesses designed to take flowers at each end. The altar table in place after the Second World War was attributed to Chippendale and came from St Catherine Coleman. Sadly it was stolen in 1981 and the present one was generously donated by the Wine & Spirit Trades.

- The moveable **Choir Stalls** form a memorial to The Revd Preb. Tom Wellard, who died in 1942 after the devastation of the church. During his ministry in the 1930s several significant improvements had been made to the church and he worked hard to protect St Olave's as well as other City churches and their treasures from the ravages of war. Ernest Glanfield, the architect of the post-war restoration, is himself commemorated in the large wooden cross placed at the end of one of the choir stalls.

- On the south side the **Trinity House Chapel** has an original reredos with carved dolphins at each end and a blue velvet panel enriched with gilt crosses. The altar carries the arms of Trinity House and the rails have 'Eddystone Lighthouse' pillars. The whole setting of this chapel is designed to express the calling of 'those who go down to the sea in ships'.

- Another maritime link is the **Admiralty Arms** on the **Navy Pew**. The actual Navy Pew was constructed in the south gallery in 1660, with its entrance from the churchyard by means of a covered stairway,

but this was removed in 1853 along with all the other galleries that had been installed throughout the church in the 17th century. The front pew on the south side, being close to the memorial of Samuel Pepys, was therefore adopted as the Navy Pew for the 20th century and beyond. A replica of the Navy Office verge[4] was kindly donated by the Samuel Pepys Club for placing at the south end of the Navy Pew.

- Use of light oak for the **Main Seating** and plain glass in the Clerestory windows gave the church a much brighter appearance than in pre-war days, while rearrangement of the pews on the south side and wider spacing of the seats provided accommodation similar to that of the earlier period, but with a marked gain in comfort. The **Front Pews on the north side of the Nave** are embellished with civic arms, while over the **Churchwardens' Pews at the west end**, there is a larger carving of the arms of the City of London.

- The beautifully crafted **Oak Ceiling** has a gilded cross over the Sanctuary, while various emblems and symbols adorn the cornices and bosses, recalling the many activities in the parish's daily life as well as its associations, past and present, with various guilds and wards of the City. As the parish lies within the Ward of Tower, it hosts the annual Wardmote[5] as well as some services of the Tower Ward Club.

- The **Crypt Chapel** owes its restoration to The Revd Preb. Tom Wellard. In 1853 it had been filled in[6] and remained in that state until 1935, when it was cleared and made suitable for use again. It dates from the end of the 12th century and is notable for the well at the east end. It suffered little damage during the Second World War and is used for occasional services. In the anteroom to the Crypt Chapel are displayed finds unearthed during excavations for the foundations of the post-war Rectory, some dating from Roman times.

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[4] The verge (from *virga*, Latin for 'rod') is a staff of office that a verger carries in procession. Vergers are lay officers of the Church who assist the priest in the planning and conduct of public worship, especially in the marshaling of processions, although historically they had a wider role.

[5] A yearly meeting at which voters can ask questions of their elected representatives.

[6] The vaults under the church were blocked up after the practice of crypt burial had been discontinued by law.

The Monuments and Brasses

A number of these were sadly destroyed, either during the bombings in 1941 or by exposure to the elements while the ruins of the building were open to the sky. Wherever possible memorials were restored and refixed into position, crests and heraldic shields having been repainted and regilded. Some of the memorials were in fragments, requiring intricate work. Repairs and restoration in the 1950s were carried out by Arthur Green and Dove Brothers, the builders who were engaged on the main rebuilding of the church.

Fuller details of most of the surviving memorials can be found in Dr Povah's *Annals*. What follows is a brief enumeration of the more significant memorials.

The monument of Peter Turner [14], partially reconstructed in June 2013 to the scale of the original and in its original location. The work of conservation and installation was carried out by Colin Bowles Ltd. The original inscription was recreated (with a subsidiary plaque recording the dates of loss and recovery of the effigy) by Lucy Haugh.

South Aisle

The gilding on Peter Turner's principal memorial inscription receives finishing touches.

- **Sir Richard Haddon (1524) [13]** Mercer and (in 1506 and for part of 1512) Lord Mayor of London. This is the oldest memorial surviving in the church. The figure of Sir Richard has long been missing, but the representations of his two wives and children remain, along with coats of arms.

- **Peter Turner (1614) [14]** Doctor of Physic and son of William Turner (see below). The present monument is a partial reconstruction, put in place in June 2013 and using elements of the original structure that survived the bombing of 1941 alongside a modern recreation of the original inscription. The effigy itself was returned to the church in 2011, having disappeared in the 1940s. Dr Turner was in the 1580s house physician at Bart's Hospital and lived for over 20 years in the parish of St Helen Bishopsgate. His body was brought to St Olave's for burial near his father in the south aisle.

- **William Turner (1568) [16]** Dean of Wells, Doctor of Physic and author of *A New Herball*, the first authoritative treatise on the use of plants in English, as well as of the first printed book devoted to birds and some observations on fish. Sometimes referred to as 'the Father of English Botany', Turner was exiled twice for his religious beliefs, but used these periods in Europe to further his medical studies, develop his fieldwork and to consult international scholars, in the process honing his knowledge not only of plants but of birds and fish. While he was never a popular writer, his work on medicinal plants was directly cited by his peer group in England, and his work on fishes and birds indirectly influenced later publications. As a result he became a seminal authority, without whose work progress in English natural history would have been considerably delayed.

- **John and Ellyne Orgone (1584)** Two figures are shown and above them scrolls contain, respectively, the words 'Learne to dye' and 'ys ye waye to life'. Between the figures is a representation of a woolpack, on which is a merchant's mark. The main text of the monument sets out maxims about mortality similar to those found in other inscriptions of the period on other sites.

- **Henry Weldon (1595)** Originally from the Crypt of Lambe's Chapel (see All Hallows Staining, page 40), but moved to St Olave's in 1893 by permission of the Clothworkers' Company.

- **Sir James Deane (1608) [17]** An impressive tripartite monument, showing Sir James and his three wives kneeling in prayer. Also shown below the adult figures are three 'chrysom children'[7]. Sir James was a wealthy merchant adventurer to the Far East and Lord of the Manor of Basingstoke, where he built almshouses that survive to this day.

- **Samuel Pepys (1703) [20]** Fashioned in 1883 to a design of Sir Arthur Blomfield and unveiled by His Excellency J. Russell Lowell, the distinguished author and poet, at that time U.S. Minister to the United Kingdom (see pages 33–38).

East end of the Sanctuary

- **Elizabeth Pepys (1669) [6]** The famous memorial in white marble commissioned by Samuel Pepys, whom Elizabeth married at the age of 14. The artist was John Bushnell (*c.*1630–1701), who had studied in Italy and was known for lively representations of his subjects. Mrs Pepys is shown with her gaze directed towards the location of the Navy Office Pew where her husband would have sat, her mouth open as if in conversation.

[7] 'The infants are represented as swathed in their chrysomes, i.e., with the white vesture which the minister placed upon them immediately after baptism, and before they were anointed with the "chrism" or baptismal oil…A child, baptised and dying before it was a month old, was called a "chrysom," "crisome," or "cresome," and its "chrysome-cloth" served as its shroud. There are many entries in our Registers of such children.' Povah, *Annals*, p. 77

The monument of James Deane [17]. The outer niches of the monument show the two wives of Deane who predeceased him holding skulls, while the wife who outlived him is shown facing him in the central niche as the couple kneel at a prie-dieu.

The two children of Deane's third marriage, shown in their robes for anointing after baptism (see footnote, facing page).

The monument of Elizabeth Pepys [6]. The bust is by John Bushnell and shows Elizabeth in an animated manner, facing towards the site of the galleried Navy Office Pew. Right: Paul Bayning [5], kneeling and facing east.

- **Andrew Bayning (1610) and Paul Bayning (1616) [5]** These brothers, who are shown in the red robes of aldermen (Paul was also sheriff), were closely involved with the Levant Company. Povah refers to this monument as 'perhaps the most picturesque in the church'.

- **Jane Humberstone (1694)** Daughter of James Hoste of Sandringham Hall, Norfolk. A finely carved marble monument, to which the name of Jane's husband, Matthew, was added below (1709).

- **Sir John Radcliffe (1568)** with armorial bearings and **Lady Anne Radcliffe (1585) [8]**. In his *Survey of London* (first published in 1598) John Stow describes a marble tomb, probably situated at the east end of the south aisle, of which these figures formed part. Sir John, whose effigy is now upright and truncated at the knees, was originally in a recumbent position, while Lady Anne knelt at his side. He was the son of Robert, first Earl of Sussex.

The effigy of Sir John Radcliffe, originally recumbent (note that his head rests on a cushion).

The effigy of Dame Anne Radcliffe [8]. The carving of this effigy, notably the draping of the dress, is especially fine.

- **Sir John Mennes (1670) [12]** An imposing black and gold monument. Sir John was an officer in the Navy and the Army before the Civil War, becoming Comptroller of the Navy with the Restoration in 1660. He also wrote satirical verses and was mentioned frequently in Pepys's Diary. The dates on the monument are according to the old style, whereby New Year's Day was on 25 March, so that, in modern reckoning, Mennes would have died in 1671.

Nave: North and South Arcades

- **Sir William Ogborne (1734)** Sheriff and an Elder Brother of Trinity House. The memorial inscription is finely expressed and the name of Sir William's widow, Lady Joyce, was added later (1744).

- **Elizabeth Gore (1698)** An elegant monument showing the figure of the deceased in low relief. The coat of arms below was apparently painted after the Second World War as Povah refers to it as having its 'tinctures gone'.

- **John Watts (1789)** President of the Council of New York before American Independence. A prominent merchant and philanthropist of Scottish ancestry, who was one of the founders of the New York City Hospital. His large properties were confiscated during The Revolution on account of his British sympathies, but were later in part recovered by his sons.

North Aisle

- **Sir Andrew Riccard (1672) [2]** Wealthy merchant and politician. Chairman of the East India Company and of the Turkey Company for a number of years, as well as Alderman and Sheriff of the City of London (1651). He was also member of parliament for the City in the First Protectorate Parliament (1654/55) and was knighted by Charles II at the Restoration in 1660. Sir Andrew entrusted the perpetual advowson[8] to five inhabitants of the parish, with himself being one of the original trustees. Sculpted by John Bushnell (cf the memorial to Elizabeth Pepys).

- **The Revd D. Alfred Povah** Rector 1860-1901 and historian of the parish. Two memorial plaques on either side of the Riccard memorial: one in brass, the other in wood.

- **The Parish War Memorial** This was the work of Sir William Goscombe John, R.A. after the Great War of 1914–18. The names of the Second World War dead were added in the 1950s as part of the restoration of the church.

[8] An advowson is the right in English law to present to the Bishop of a diocese a nominee for appointment to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice, i.e. in essence the right to nominate who should be parish priest, subject to the Bishop's approval. The lord of the principal manor in which the parish concerned was situated originally held such rights, but advowsons became valuable interests and could be transferred to others. Sir Andrew acquired the advowson of St Olave's in 1655 and by placing it in trust ensured that the Parish had considerable control over who should be appointed its priest. The power of presentation to the living now rests with the St Olave's Patronage Trust.

- **Thomas Morley (1566)** Clerk of the Queen's Storehouse at Deptford. The inscription on the brass tablet contains, as Povah says, 'curious conceits and classical allusions'.

- **Peter Capponi (1582) [4]** A most important and finely carved monument to an Italian merchant, whose figure is shown life-size. Capponi, who was from a prominent Florentine family, escaped political turmoil in Italy and spied for the English, but succumbed to the plague in London. The monument was provided by a friend, Peter Landi, who was also of Florentine parentage but born in Lyon. The monument was repaired and restored by Cliveden Conservation in 2013, when the effigy was exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery.

The effigy of Peter Capponi, whose activities are thought to have included spying for the English. The monument was originally at floor level.

Baptistery (at the base of the Tower)

- **Elizabeth Billingsley (1577)** Wife of Sir Henry Billingsley, Lord Mayor of London in 1596. The only monument surviving in the church to have been originally located in St Catherine Coleman (page 46).

- **John Highlord (1619)** The inscription on the marble slab records the bequest by this man, who died well in his eighties, to the poor of the parish and for the preaching of four sermons a year.

- **Andreas Riccard (i.e. Sir Andrew Riccard) (1672)** An engraved brass, now above the Crypt steps but originally located next to the Chancel step to mark the location of Riccard's burial. See also **[2]**.

- **George Schrader (1605)** Brass, originally on the floor near the door of the old Vestry but now above the Crypt steps. Schrader, who was buried in the Chancel, was from a noble family of Brunswick, Germany.

The Churchyard and Gateway

Now a small oasis of green space among the high-rise buildings of the City, the churchyard dates back to medieval times. The house of Sir Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth I's spymaster, stood opposite, while, some decades later, Samuel Pepys would have walked through the churchyard from his house in Seething Lane to attend services. Among those buried here are hundreds of victims of the Great Plague of 1665, and a woman known as 'Mother Goose'.

Being mostly from the 19th century (one is from the 18th), the gravestones and tombs that survive in the churchyard are heavily weathered and, in some instances, completely illegible. However, one stone in fragments, removed to a place of safety in 2012 to prevent further damage, is of particular interest and rarity. It is of black limestone and incised with a marginal inscription in Flemish running three and a quarter times around the slab and recording the names and dates of death of several members of the van Thielt family; it also bears a merchant's mark. The slab is not mentioned in any sources and the dates on it all precede the earliest known burial registers of the church (which commence in 1563), so it is possible that it came originally from another church. It is planned to restore the stone and relocate it within the church, where it will be sheltered from the elements.

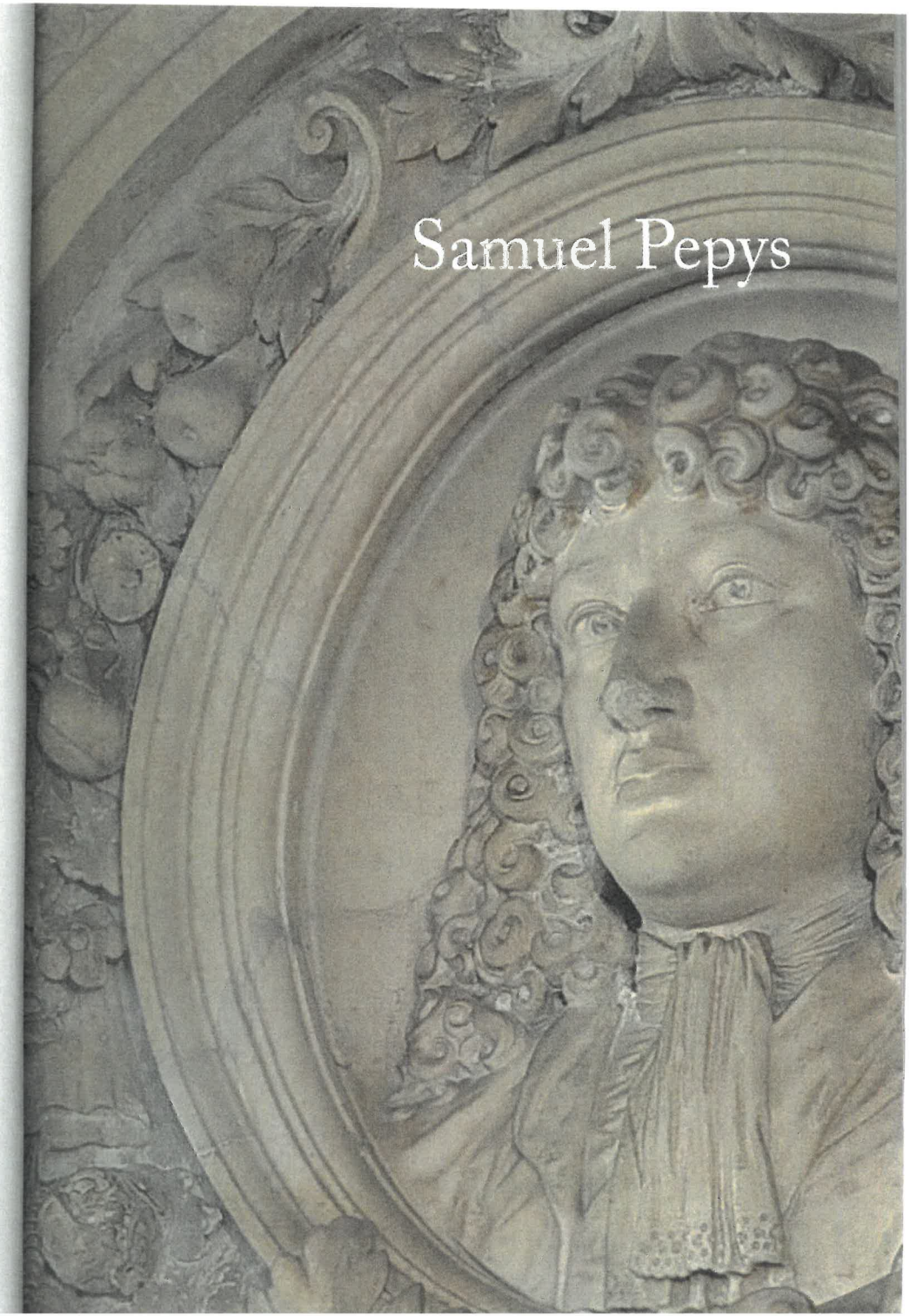
The gateway to the churchyard on Seething Lane **[25]** is an object of interest with its emblems of mortality – skulls and crossbones. Above the gate is an inscription dated 11 April 1658 and reading '*Christus vivere Mors mihi lucrum*', words of St Paul rendered in the King James Version of the Bible as, 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (Philippians 1:21).

Charles Dickens was particularly fond of the gateway and churchyard. In *The City of the Absent* – included in his *The Uncommercial Traveller*, a collection of literary sketches and reminiscences compiled between 1860 and 1869 – he gives the following account of them:

> One of my best beloved churchyards, I call the churchyard of *St Ghastly Grim*; touching what men in general call it, I have no information. It lies at the heart of the City, and the Blackwall Railway

The gateway to St Olave's churchyard, christened by Dickens 'Saint Ghastly Grim'.

shrieks at it daily. It is a small, small churchyard with a ferocious strong spiked iron gate, like a jail. This gate is ornamented with skulls and crossbones larger than the life, wrought in stone; but it likewise came into the mind of Saint Ghastly Grim, that to stick iron spikes atop of the stone skulls, as though they were impaled, would be a pleasant device. Therefore the skulls grin aloft horribly, thrust through and through with iron spears. Hence there is attraction of repulsion for me in Saint Ghastly Grim and, having often contemplated it in the daylight and the dark, I once felt drawn to it in a thunderstorm at midnight. 'Why not?' I said, in self-excuse. 'I have been to the Colosseum by the light of the moon; is it worse to go and see Saint Ghastly Grim by the light of lightning?' I repaired to the Saint in a hackney cab and found the skulls most effective, having the air of a public execution and seeming, as the lightning flashed, to wink and grin with the pain of the spikes. Having no other person to whom to impart my satisfaction I communicated it to the driver. So far from being responsive, he surveyed me – he was naturally a bottle-nosed, red-faced man – with a blanched countenance. And as he drove me back, he ever and again glanced in over his shoulder through the little front window of his carriage, as mistrusting that I was a fare originally from a grave, in the churchyard of Saint Ghastly Grim, who might have flitted home again without paying.

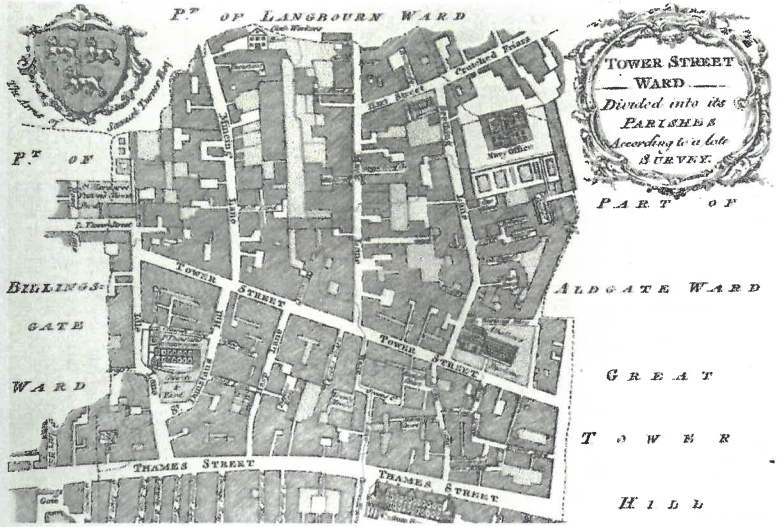


No history of St Olave's would be complete without some brief notes on the eminent diarist, Samuel Pepys, who moved into the parish on 17 July 1660 with his wife, Elizabeth. His private diary is one of the most important historical sources of the Restoration period and contains eyewitness accounts of major events, including the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of London of 1666. As chief Secretary to the Admiralty under both Charles II and James II, his work was highly influential in creating a more professional Royal Navy.

Pepys was born in 1633 and educated at St Paul's School, London, and Magdalene College Cambridge, where he 'did put on his first gown March 5th, 1650–51'. At the age of 22, two years after leaving university, he married 14-year-old Elizabeth, daughter of Alexandre Marchant, Sieur de St Michel. They had a religious ceremony on 10 October 1655, followed by a civil ceremony on 1 December in the same year at St Margaret's, Westminster. The young couple had little money but were generously helped by Pepys's kinsman Sir Edward Montagu, later Earl of Sandwich, who gave them a home in his family. This patron, to whom Pepys always expresses his gratitude, helped to get him a job as a clerk in the Army Pay Office of the Exchequer at an annual salary of £50. As Pepys's diary for 30 January, 1660 records: 'I taking my £12. 10s. due to me for my last quarter's salary'.

This was a stepping stone to higher appointments. On 29 June 1660 Pepys records: 'Up to Whitehall where I got my warrant from the Duke to be Clerke of the Acts'. This post gave him equal status with the other Commissioners of the Navy Board, together with a large increase in pay. It was through this appointment that Pepys came in July 1660 to live at, or next door to, the Navy Office, the principal entrance to which was in Crutched Friars. Pepys's home was on the Seething Lane side of the Navy Office and, on 18 July 1660, he described it as 'my house in Seething Lane'.

The intelligence and industry which Pepys showed as an official soon gained attention. In 1665 he was appointed Surveyor General of the Victualling Office and in 1673 was promoted to Secretary to the Admiralty. Six years later he was elected MP for Harwich, but came under attack from political enemies. He resigned from his Admiralty post and in 1679 was imprisoned for several weeks in the Tower of London, falsely accused of passing naval intelligence to France and of being a papist. Proceedings



Part of a plan of the Tower Street Ward as it was in 1772, showing the close proximity of the Navy Office to St Olave's

against him were eventually dropped and by 1684 he was back in favour, taking up his post again at the Admiralty. His tenure there came to an end after James II was overthrown in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Pepys was imprisoned twice more in 1689 and 1690 on suspicion of supporting the restoration of James to the throne, but no charges were proved. He retired from public life at the age of 57.

That Pepys was a man of some courage is shown by his actions during the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666. As plague took its hold on London, Pepys sent the Navy Office staff and his wife and retinue to relative safety south of the river but he himself remained at his post. He wrote to his superior, Sir William Coventry:

> The sickness in general thickens round us, and particularly upon our neighbourhood…You, Sir, took your turn of the sword; I must not therefore grudge to take mine of the pestilence.

During the Great Fire the following year he and others helped to save the Navy Office and St Olave's from destruction by employing dockyard workers to pull down nearby houses to create fire breaks and prevent the fire from spreading. On 4 September 1666 he wrote to Sir William Coventry to seek permission for this demolition from the Duke of York:

> The fire is now very neere us as well on Tower Streete as Fanchurch Street side, and we have little hope of our escape but by that remedy to the want whereof we do certainly owe the loss of the City, namely, the pulling down of houses in the way of the fire. This way Sir W. Pen and myself have so far concluded upon the practising that he is gone to Woolwich and Deptford to supply himself with men and necessarys in order to the doing thereof.

The next day, 5 September 1666, the diary records:

> About 2 in the morning my wife calls me up and tells me of new cryes of fire, it being come to Barkeing Church [All Hallows-by-the-Tower] which is the bottom of our lane [Seething Lane]... But going to the fire [later that day, having in the meantime taken his wife and retinue to Greenwich by boat], I find by the blowing up of houses and the great help given by the workmen out of the King's Yard sent up by Sir W. Pen, there is a good stop given to it, as well as at Marke Lane end as ours, it having only burned the dyall of Barking Church and part of the porch, and was there quenched.

The very first time Samuel Pepys was at church was eight days after his birth. The baptismal register of St Bride's Fleet Street for 1633 records: 'Samuell, sonn of John Peeps, wyef Margaret'. Pepys at church was very much the ordinary man and more than once he was to give expression to the standard refuge of those bored by preachers: 'I slept soundly all the sermon'. He lived in the age of sermons when, on entering the pulpit, the preacher would turn the hour glass and preach until the sand in it ran down and then might, if he felt so inclined or his congregation desired, turn it again at the end of the hour and carry on for another.

Above: A contemporary print of Pepys's wife Elizabeth, and (right) the Victorian memorial to the diarist on the site of the entrance to the Navy Office pew.

Pepys also showed the ordinary man's impatience when he felt that his generosity was being imposed upon. In his case it was in the matter of 'briefs' (a system of charitable collections for specific objects) and he records at one point:

> To church, where we observe the trade of briefs is come now to be so constant a course every Sunday that we resolve to give no more to them.

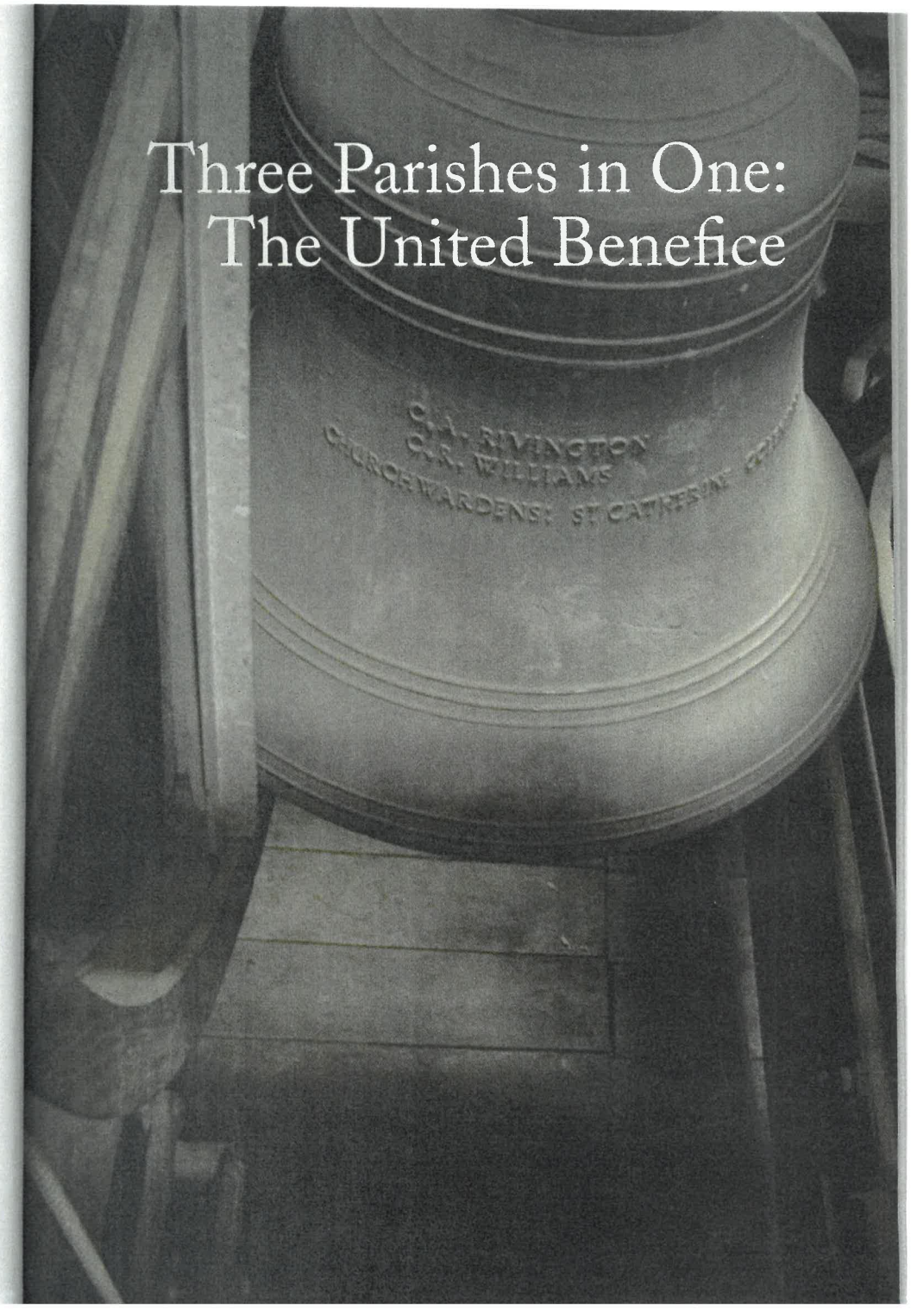
On 26 May 1703 Pepys died in Clapham, at the house of Will Hewer, his close associate and former clerk, and on 5 June was buried at St Olave's at nine o'clock at night 'in a vault by ye Communion table' (as the church register records). His wife, who had died of typhoid fever in 1669 aged only 29, and his brother John, who died in 1676, are buried in the same location.

Pepys was very proud of his seat in the special Navy Office pew in the south gallery. This was one of the massive galleries which dwarfed the church interior in the 17th century but which were removed in 1853. As mentioned

earlier, in honour of the historic link with the Navy Office the front pew ends on the south side bear carved Admiralty crests. The entrance to the south gallery was reached by an enclosed staircase from the churchyard and its location is marked on the outer wall by an inscription. On the inside the corresponding position is occupied by Pepys's memorial.

Pepys's diary – written in an established system of shorthand, not, as has sometimes been asserted, in code – was not transcribed and published until 1825, and then only in a reduced form. Thereafter his fame as a diarist grew through the 19th century, tending to eclipse his reputation as a consummate public administrator. As a result, by the 1880s, it seemed odd that there was no memorial to Pepys in his 'own church'. A committee, mainly representing institutions with which Pepys had been connected, was formed to raise funds and commission a memorial, which was installed in 1883 and unveiled in 1884.

Three Parishes in One: The United Benefice



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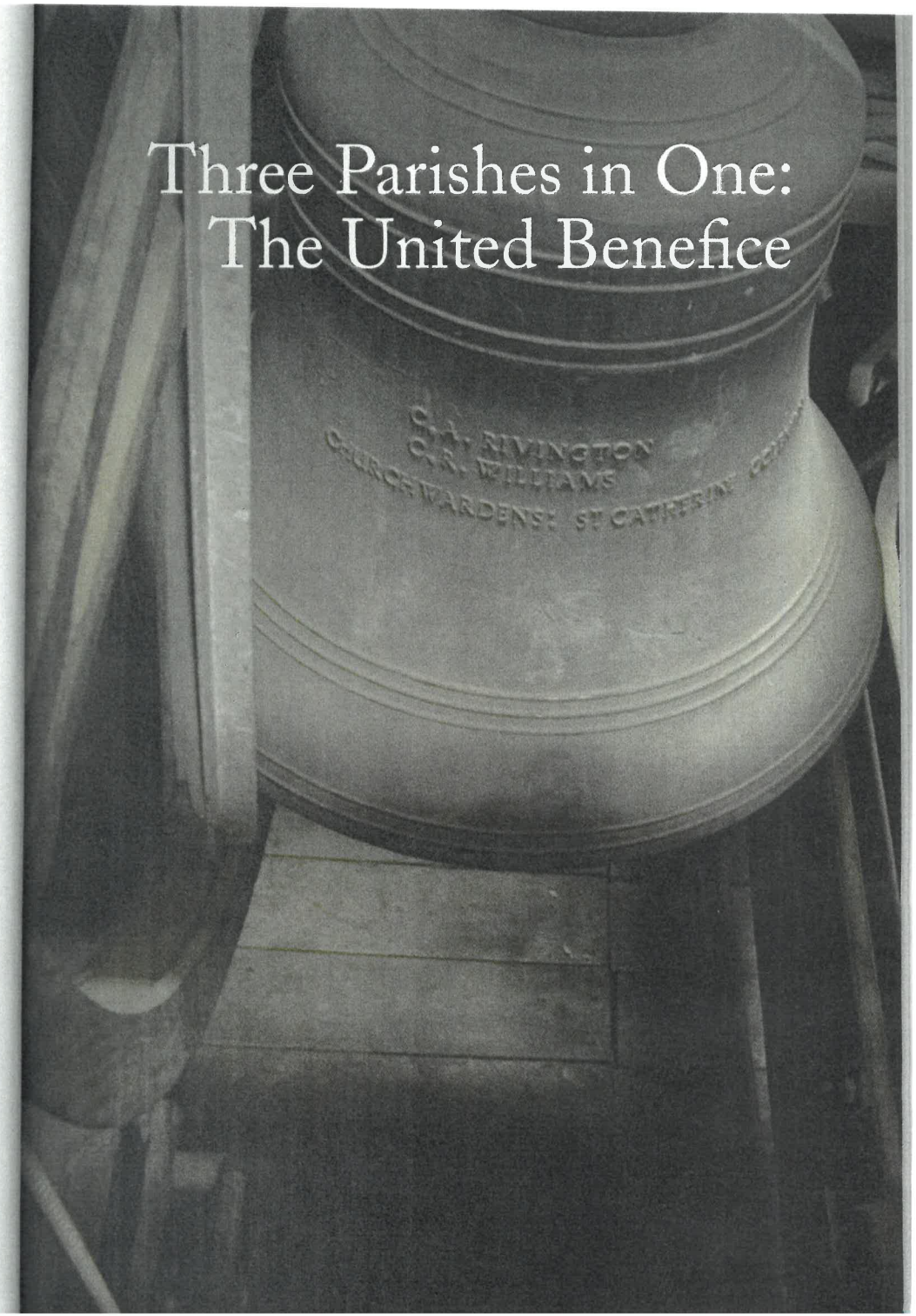


There are two other churches whose parishes have been joined with that of St Olave's to form a united benefice: All Hallows Staining and St Catherine Coleman. Vestiges of both remain and can be seen within easy walking distance of St Olave's.

All Hallows Staining

The only remains of this ancient church are: the tower, which stands some 70 feet in height towards the north end of Mark Lane; the outline of the churchyard; and some historic grave markers. Most of the church was demolished following the union of its parish with that of St Olave Hart Street in 1870. The Clothworkers' Company, whose hall stands to the west of the tower, acquired and still owns the sites of the church, churchyard and rectory. The church had been rebuilt following collapse in 1671 but the surviving tower, now a scheduled ancient monument, is over 400 years old and is a good example of the Perpendicular Gothic style.

In his *Survey of London* John Stow writes of All Hallows Staining:

> This parish is commonly supposed to have received its distinctive adjunct 'Staining' or 'Stane-Church' from a difference from other churches of that name in this Citie, which (of old time) were builded of timber, and since were builded of stone.

It is possible that the devastating fires of 1087 and 1136 had shown the desirability of building churches from stone instead of wood. All Hallows Staining has traditionally been regarded as one of the earliest stone churches erected in London, 1140 being suggested as its date of construction.

It may however have derived its name, as William Loftie (1839-1911) suggests:

> from a certain holding in the City, which is mentioned in Domesday Book, and, apparently, still earlier in a charter of Edward the Confessor addressed to 'William, bishop; Harold, earl; and Esgar, staller' as belonging to the manor of Staines.

The tower of All Hallows Staining in its contemporary surroundings

All Hallows Staining as it appeared in the first half of the 19th century

The earliest document in which special mention was made of this parish is dated 1281, the will of Ralph de la More. He must have possessed considerable property in the City, for there are bequests of houses and rents in 'All Hallows de Staningecherch', and five other parishes, and of his capital mansion in 'Martelane, parish of All hallows de Berkingecherch [All Hallows by the Tower]'. Another early mention of the parish is in 1311, when Walter de Gloucestre leaves to his wife Dyonisia 'his tenement in the parish of All Hallows de Stanyngcherche for life'.

In the first half of the 14th century various spellings of the name of the church appear in documents: 'Stanenecherche' in Hugh de Waltham's will, 1335; 'All Hallows de Stannychurche' in the will of Gilbert Atte Leye (a 'junctuarius' i.e.'joiner'), 1349; and 'Stanenchirche near Blaunchapelton' in the will of Thomas de Maryns, 1349. Blaunchapelton was the name of a manor situated at the northeast corner of Mark Lane, and belonged in the time of Richard II to Sir Thomas Roos of Hamelake.

In 1367 the rectory and parish church of All Hallows Staining became the property of the abbot and convent of the Cistercian Abbey of Grace, Little Tower Hill, and remained so until the dissolution of the abbey in 1539. This abbey was founded by Edward III in 1349 in fulfilment of a vow, made on board ship during a storm, that if God would grant him to come safe to land he would build a monastery to the honour of God and Our Lady of the Graces. The abbey was also styled 'Eastminster', and this title suggests that it probably was intended to be to the East of London what Westminster Abbey was to the West of London. It was situated on Little Tower Hill, near East Smithfield and, for 35 years, from 1367 to 1402, the church of All Hallows Staining was served by priests who were also monks of the abbey, the authority of the abbot being sufficient to make these appointments. Ultimately secular priests were appointed after the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII.

The tower once contained a peal of six bells. According to James Malcolm (in *Londinium Redivivum*, 1803) it was said in the parish that the bells were rung with so much zeal when Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I) was released from the Tower of London in May 1554 that she

afterwards presented the ringers with a set of bell ropes[9]. It is also reported that she attended divine service in the church to give thanks to God for her liberation, afterwards dining on pork and peas at 'Henry the VIIIth's Tavern', at one time situated at the north-west corner of Mark Lane and Fenchurch Street and later called 'The King's Head'.

In fact, how strongly attached the Londoners of those days were to Elizabeth I may be gathered from entries in the churchwardens' Minute Books. It is recorded, for example: 'Pd. to the Ringers for Joye the traytors were taken, 6d'. This refers to the arrest of Anthony Babington and his fellow conspirators in 1586. The ringers received eight pence more when the unlucky Mary Queen of Scots was 'proclaymed traytor' and a whole shilling on 9 February 1587 'for love of ye execution of ye Queene of Scotts'.

John Strype, in his *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* (1720), an updated edition of Stow's *Survey*, says of All Hallows Staining:

> This church escaped the Great Fire, but some years later fell all down, yet giving some warning of its fall to the sexton, that was then digging a grave near the foundation of the wall, who conveyed himself hastily away and saved his life.

There is a reference to this catastrophe in the marriage register, where the following entry appears:

> 1671, November, 25th The church fell down, so that (30th) Richard Clare and Ann Cosins were married at Barking.

James Malcolm gives a plausible explanation for the fall of the church walls:

> The Tower, and that part of the west end of the church immediately attached to it, did not fall; from which circumstance, and the firm appearance of it at present [1803] I am persuaded the foundation was undermined and weakened by the pernicious practice of making graves within and close to places of worship.

9 The ropes were long reputed to have been made of silk, but this would have been an unsuitable material, as it would have stretched. It is possible that it would have been the grips ('sallies') that were made of silk.

It is interesting to note, as an aside, that foundling children were given the name of the parish as a surname, as in the Baptismal Register (1653–1710) the following entries appear:

1642. Aug. 3. Alice Stainings, a foundlinge.
1643. Oct. 6. Marke Stainings, a foundlinge.

The last service in the church of All Hallows Staining was held on 10 May 1870, although that did not mark the end of church activity on the site. In 1873, William Lambe's hermitage chapel of St James-in-the-Wall Monkwell Street, bequeathed to the Clothworkers' Company in the 16th century, was pulled down under special act of parliament. Under this chapel was an ancient crypt of the transitional Norman period, having a vaulted roof supported by short columns with ornate capitals of Caen stone. Much of the crypt was removed to Mark Lane and reinstated as a vault beneath the tower of All Hallows for the private use of the Clothworkers' Company.

Between 1948 and 1954, while St Olave Hart Street was being rebuilt following extensive wartime damage, a prefabricated church stood on the site of All Hallows Staining. This was known as St Olave Mark Lane and the tower of All Hallows was used as the chancel of the temporary church.

The temporary church known as St Olave Mark Lane

In 1957, after the newly restored St Olave's had been in use for three years, the Clothworkers' Company built a church hall for St Olave's on part of the site.

Sadly, a number of memorials moved to the north aisle of St Olave's from All Hallows upon the union of parishes in the 1870s were destroyed in the wartime air raids (including the memorial to Davison and Newman referred to above, page 19).

St Catherine Coleman

The Church of St Catherine Coleman (as its name is now spelt in the full name of the united benefice) stood on the site in Fenchurch Street now occupied by Lloyd's Register and was one of three churches in the City of London dedicated to St Katharine, the others being St Katharine Cree (formerly 'Creechurch', i.e. 'Christ Church'), which still stands on Leadenhall Street, and St Katharine-by-the-Tower, a hospital church, demolished in 1825 to make way for St Katharine Docks.

Richard Newcourt's *Repertorium* (1708) describes Saint Katharine as a virgin of Alexandria, daughter of a king named Costus, a learned woman, and a convert to the Christian faith. She was cruelly tortured by the Emperor Maxentius, who caused her to be tormented and crushed between wheels made of iron saws and swords (for which reason she is usually pictured with a wheel), but in vain:

> for the wheels, by the prayers of St Katharine were broken and cast asunder... finally she yielded her neck to the sword of the executioner with a courageous heart, being but 18 years old.

The day celebrated in her commemoration is the 25 November.

The earliest known references to the church are found in three wills at the end of the 13th century, where there is mention of the parish of 'All Hallows de Colemanncherche' with one describing it as 'towards Alegate'. In 1288 Henry Ie Mazure left to his son Edmund a house with which to maintain 15 masses in the church of 'All Hallows de Colemancherche'. The parish is also

mentioned in 1304 and 1307, and the names of the earliest rectors go back to 1329 and 1330. It seems therefore that the dedication at the beginning of the church's history was that of All Hallows and that, perhaps on account of the numerous dedications to All Saints, it was then called 'St Katherine and All Saints'. As for 'Coleman', Stow says that this name:

> ...was taken of a great Haw-yard or Garden, of olde time, called Coleman haw in the parish of the Trinitie now called Christs Church [i.e. St Katharine Cree, which was built for the worship of the laity in the precincts of the Priory of the Holy Trinity, which stood just inside the Aldgate] and in the parish of saint Katherine and all Saints, called Coleman Church.

Presumably the garden referred to belonged to an individual by the name of Coleman, but the derivation is lost in the mists of the past.

St Catherine Coleman escaped the Great Fire of 1666 and, in the subsequent rebuilding of the City, the levels of the streets were raised. The eastern end of Fenchurch Street was said to have been raised 20 feet, which meant that a flight of steps had to be made to get to the church. The effect of the raising can still be seen by the steps that lead from Fenchurch Place to Hart Street.

In 1726, the church was ordered to be closed because of its dangerous condition. There was considerable debate about whether to pull it down or repair it and, in the following year, £50 was spent on shoring up and supporting the walls. However by 1734 it was decided to demolish the church and raise the ground to the level of Fenchurch Street. An Act of Parliament was passed to enable this to be done and to levy a special rate on the parish to cover the cost of works.

In 1741 a new church was erected and a description in Godwin's *Churches of London* (1837–9) reads:

> It may be confidently stated that no parish in the metropolis would now allow such a piece of ugliness to be erected. It is built of brick and has rusticated dressings of stone around the windows and doors. The interior presents merely a plain room with a flat ceiling coved at the sides ornamented by one large oval panel with a flower in the centre. The altar piece stands within a circular recess at the East End and is quite plain.

St Catherine Coleman (1741 version): the building so disparaged by Godwin.

The parish seems to have had a fairly uneventful existence and the churchwardens' books and the vestry minutes contain little of note. The dukes of Northumberland had been parishioners in the Middle Ages and their town house occupied the whole site of what is now Lloyd's Avenue. Some of the smaller houses adjacent had a bad reputation as gaming houses, and the bowling greens were regarded as 'the resort of loose characters', particularly on Sundays. A part of the Northumberland House site was sold to the vestry and a parish workhouse was built upon it. The East India Company acquired most of the rest of the site and covered it with huge warehouses. Upon the expiration of their charter, these were sold to the East and West India Dock Company. Later a Mr James Dixon bought the whole site and developed the area for commercial purposes.

In the 19th century the church was opened at 5 am on weekdays for factory hands and others coming into Fenchurch Street by the early trains. This was for a time a most successful innovation, but for thirty years between 1886 and 1916 the church struggled to keep a congregation. The rectors were bishops of Northern and Central Europe and spent much of the time on the continent, employing a curate to look after St Catherine's. It was not a happy arrangement for the parish and, when the last rector of the church died in 1919, the vacancy was not filled. The Bishop of London felt that this opportunity should be taken to open up the question of the removal of the church and the union of the parish with another. A commission was appointed which reported in favour of union with the parish of St Olave's. All parties directly concerned having agreed, a scheme was drawn up by the ecclesiastical commissioners and ratified by an order in council on 18 October 1921.

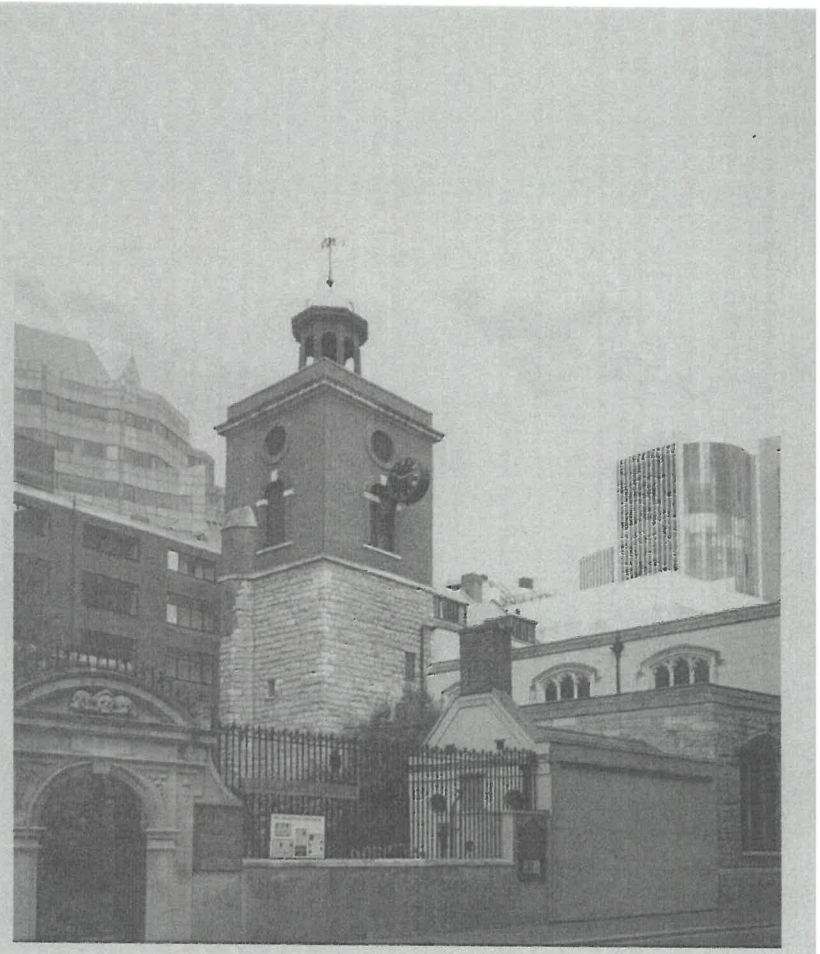
Closing services at St Catherine's were held on Wednesday and Sunday, 16 and 20 November 1921. On the Sunday evening St Olave's was closed and the congregation was invited to attend St Catherine's. It was by all accounts a wonderful and inspiring service, with standing room only. The Rector of St Olave's conducted the service and preached from the text, Psalm 119:96: 'I see all things come to an end; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.'

The extensive and varied activities of St Olave's in the City of London today give, in retrospect, an almost prophetic quality to these words.

Other London Churches Dedicated to St Olave

There were three other churches in the City dedicated to Saint Olave: one in Silver Street (first referred to in the 12th century but not rebuilt after the Great Fire); St Olave Old Jewry (rebuilt after the Great Fire but demolished in 1887, although a 17th-century tower survives); St Olave Bradestrat (i.e. St Olave Bread Street, whose parish was united with that of St Nicholas to form the parish of St Nicholas Olave but which was also destroyed in the Great Fire and never rebuilt). Outside the City boundary and south of the Thames there was St Olave's Church in Tooley Street, whose foundation can be conclusively dated to before the Norman Conquest. 'Tooley Street' is in fact a corruption of 'St Olave Street', and The Revd Preb. Tom Wellard in his history of St Olave Hart Street from 1100 to 1936 gives the following explanation of this strange transposition of the name:

> St Olave is referred to in one of the Cely letters where William Maryon, a partner in the firm of Cely, writes [in 1476] to George Cely who is in Calais to purchase a:
>
> > 'vernakelys seche as youre broder Robard hath yyeven unto Sent Tolowys scryssche'
>
> (The spelling is rather terrible but we can see 'Saint Olave's' and note how later came 'Tooley Street' being a corruption of 'St Olave's Street'; 'scryssche' is an extraordinary spelling for 'church!') The 'Vernicle' which Robert presented to the church was a copy of Veronica's handkerchief kept in Rome.



About this booklet

The original version of *Our Own Church* was written by Eileen Grey, with photographs by Alf Pyner, for *Maltese Cross*, the staff magazine of Lloyd's Register of Shipping. Both Miss Grey and Mr Pyner were on the headquarters staff of Lloyd's Register, whose present building stands on the site of St Catherine Coleman. The historic churchyard of St Catherine's forms a large part of the forecourt of Lloyd's Register and its original metal railings are still visible to the rear of the East India Arms public house on the south side of Fenchurch Street. Lloyd's Register reprinted *Our Own Church* for sale in St Olave's for the benefit of church funds and the production of this new edition has also been enabled by the generous assistance of Lloyd's Register.

The first edition included the following note:

> The author is grateful to the Rev. L.E.M. Claxton, M.C., M.A., A.R.C.M., Rector of St Olave's, not only for his kind permission to use and quote from a number of publications by his predecessors on the history of these three ancient Churches now united in one Benefice, but also for the assistance he himself has so generously given.

Colonel The Revd Leslie 'Gus' Claxton had a distinguished military career and was rector of St Olave's from 1968 to 1985, among other achievements beginning the tradition of weekly music recitals in the church that continue to this day.

This updated version of *Our Own Church* includes, with amendments and additions, material by The Revd Augustus Powell Miller from his *New Annals of St Olave Hart Street*, published at the time of the restoration and re-hallowing of the church in the 1950s. Thanks are due to Dr Julian Litten for information about Ernest Glanfield and the observation about the material of the bell ropes given (or not) by Princess Elizabeth to All Hallows Staining.

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